

Washington, DC: Congressman Joe Sestak congratulated local high school student Janet Song yesterday on her prestigious Davidson Scholarship award. Song, a junior at Methacton High School in Norristown, developed a urine test for the early detection of cancer. For her contribution to medicine, she was awarded a \$25,000 Davidson Scholarship. — “Janet’s accomplishments are an inspiration to all of us,” said Congressman Sestak. “Her innovation and dedication to the fight against cancer are truly commendable.”

After watching a friend lose both parents to cancer, Song decided to use her interest in science to combat the disease. She learned about laboratory techniques through a research opportunity at Drexel University and worked towards more patient-friendly screening tests. Knowing that urine contains short-length DNA from possible cancer sights, Song developed a method to isolate this DNA to screen for cancer-associated mutations. This procedure is much less invasive and unpleasant than current cancer tests, and is much less expensive to conduct. Song hopes her method will increase compliance rates and allow for earlier cancer detection.

Congressman Sestak, whose daughter was diagnosed with a malignant brain tumor two years ago, thanked Song for her hard work on this issue. “Janet’s test can help doctors detect cancer while it is in earlier stages,” he said. “I know from personal experience that this significantly increases survival rates.”

Song, who is also a world-renowned piano player, is currently considering her college options. She plans to major in molecular biology or a biomedical field. “I was honored to meet this remarkable young lady,” said the Congressman. “I am deeply grateful for her contribution to cancer research, and I wish her all the best as she continues her studies.”

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the Congress.